

From: Timothy John Webb
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 6:16pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I truly believe that Microsoft is manipulating the government and trying to get the most beneficial settlement they can get. They no doubt have a monopoly and will do everything in their power to keep it that way. Personal computer users at home especially have no choice but to buy Microsoft products, and when Microsoft chooses to not support their version, they are forced to upgrade, costing hundreds of dollars to you regular Amercian citizen. On top of that, each new distribution of Microsoft products, especially the windowing environment unfairly called Windows, is more bulky and buggy than the previous release. If a user is satisfied with their current software, they should not be forced to upgrade to something more resource demanding. This creates a need to upgrade the hardware so that the programs may run more smoothly with the additional unwanted features that take up valuable space. As long as MS holds their monopololy, all major releases of software will either be strictly Windows 98/2000/NT/XP and, if lucky, a realease for Apple computers as well. Be informed, though, that Apple is much different from MS and should not be considered something that voids the Monopoly. Apple makes their hardware and software specific for each other. If a consumer buys an iMac, they also get the Mac operating system. Typically Apple products and MS products are not interchangeable. For an IBM-compatible computer, the choices are: Microsoft Products, and Microsoft Approved Products. As a consumer, I hate to be locked into the Microsoft cycle. It is not an easy task to eliminate Microsoft products from my computer. If I do, I lose the "priveledge" to 99.99% of all distributed software. I walk into my local retail store and can not find a single program that does not say that it REQUIRES MS Windows 98/2000/NT/XP. Notice that this no longer includes Windows 95. This means all the consumers who are happy with 95, some of whom I know, MUST upgrade if they want to run the latest software. And MS upgrades are not free, and not cheap.

Bottom line is that if the Government says you have a monopoly, you must split. Or you must cease these unfair business practices and do such and such to fix the existing repricussions, MS should follow without whining. Instead, they carry it out as long as possible, pull every string they can, put in conditions that will help them more than hurt them, and insist on their conditions. Justice must prevail, DO NOT give the citizens of this country, dedicated to freedom, the perception that the judicial system will bend over backwards for billionaires. Where is our freedom of choice for computer products?